

General terms you hear all the time on set:

Apple box - A sturdy wooden crate used to raise and level everything from camera, to props, to actors. They come in different sizes..ie: full apple, 1/2 apple, 1/4 apple, and 1/8 apple. They are provided by the Grip Department

Back to One - When the Director wants everyone to return to their starting locations for that scene to begin another take.

Barn Doors - Side panels on lights in front of the lens used to shape and direct light at the source.

Blocking a shot - Is where actors or stand-ins go through the scene with the Director with all of the department keys watching. This allows the crew to determine where to set the camera, lights, props and any other needed equipment.

Breakfast - first meal of the day, this could be at 10:00am or 2:00pm depending on crew call.

C-47 - wooden clothespin, use to clip gels to hot lights. Grip and Electric Dept.

C-stand - metal stand with telescoping pole. Comes in a standard and short version, as well as one which can be used on steps or uneven ground. Part of the Grip Dept.

Call sheet - sheet with everyone's names and call times

Call time - the time you are to be on set, ready to work. Not everyone will have the same call time.

Crew Call - the call time for most crew, used to determine when lunch will be

Call back - where you're called in to audition a 2nd, 3rd, 4th time.

Camera right, Camera left - The direction to move yourself or an object as viewed from behind the camera.

Cheat - to make objects and people appear normal on camera, their positions will sometimes need to be altered in real life. Pictures may be angled, tables tilted, or even some actors raised or lowered.

Cinematographer - is also called the Director of Photography (DP)

Clam Shell - Small hand-held video recorder used for playback. VTR equipment

Cookie - patterned board put in front of the light to breakup or "pattern" the light onto the background. Grip Dept.

Continuity - Is where the actors, wardrobe, props, and the set stays the same from shot to shot so it can be easily cut together. Sometimes the scene can be shot over multiple days and you'll want to remember which hand was doing what and how much tea was in you glass. Many people are watching for this but mostly Script Supervisor, Props, Set, Wardrobe, and Hair

Craftie - craft service, provides snacks between meals, gum, breathmints, vitamins, and sometimes aspirin and sunscreen.

Cut Away Shot- This is a shot which looks away from the action and is used in editing to help make smooth transitions between shots. Different than an Insert Shot.

Dailies - unedited shots that the Director and Producer look at to review the prior day's shooting

Day into night - a shooting day where you start working in the afternoon, like 3 pm and shoot until 3 am.

Day for Night - when scenes are shot in the day with filters on the camera to make it look like night.

Dialogue - refers to spoken lines

Dolly - Heavy camera platform that can smoothly move a camera up/down, side to side, forward and back, or on a track all while supporting the camera, camera operator, and the camera 1st assistant.

Dubbing, looping - when they match dialogue with lip movements in post.

Eye line - the direction the actor is looking during a scene. This is often “cheated” so that it appears correct in camera.

Fill Light - fills in the shadows from the main light (Key light)

Fire Watch - This is someone who stays on set while everyone else goes to lunch. They are there to make sure the set is secure while no one is around and to make sure no one messes with the hot set. On well managed sets this person has already eaten or someone else is bringing them lunch from the caterer. The PA's normally provide this task.

Flag - black flags that create a shadow (cut the light)

Flare - A lens flare is where stray light is hitting the camera lens causing octagon shapes.

Flying In - Term used to indicate something is immediately being brought to set.

Framing - What the camera sees when its ready to start shooting. There may be more than one frame if the camera moves during the take. In this case there will be a position, or frame, for the beginning and end of each move.

Foley artist - in post production, they make the sound effects to enhance the sound track.

Gaffers tape - Woven fabric tape with strong adhesive backing that comes in 1 and 2 inch widths. Designed so as not to leave adhesive residue like duct tape. Caution: Do Not Use this on painted or delicate surfaces

Gaffer - the head of the lighting/electrical department. This person determines which lights to use to get the look the Director of Photography is looking for.

Gate - The opening in the camera behind the lens. When the Director gets the shot they want you'll hear the 1st AD yell “Checking the Gate”. If the gate is good (free of debris) its time to move on to the next setup. On todays digital shoots you may hear “Checking the Chip” if the shot is critical or difficult to setup, or they are using a camera that is not being reliable. The Digital Tech or DIT will check the image on a computer to make sure it is good.

Grace - When it's been 6 hours and it's time for lunch. We're in the middle of a shot, the 1st AD will call 'Grace' so that we can finish the shot. It's supposed to be 15 minutes max, but sometimes is more.

Green Screen - Shot where the actor stands in front of a large evenly lit green wall. This allows editors to easily insert background images in final edit.

Grip - the crew position that uses tools like flags, diffusion (gels, silks), mirrors, reflective bounces ...etc to shape the light. Grips like to say that Electric provides the light and the Grips sculpt it.

Handheld - When the camera operator holds the camera in their hands or on their shoulder. Common for documentaries, news, and for action scenes.

High definition - A high resolution image that has many competing formats. The RED camera is high-def. the Alexa is high def and many consumer cameras are now high def but lower quality formats.

Hitting the mark - The positions an actor needs to stop at during a scene. This is critical for camera focus, eye-lines, and continuity. The positions are normally marked by colored tape on the floor.

“In the can” - An old film saying indicating that everything needed for a scene or project has been shot and the exposed film has been transferred to light proof containers. Today it means we’re done with one section and ready to move on to the next.

Honey wagon - A trailer which has bathrooms for the crew, and actors unless there is a private one in their dressing room.

Insert Shot - This is a shot which adds to the detail of a scene such as a hand holding a remote control which is shot from an actors POV.

Hot set - The set with all of its lights and props are in place and ready for shooting. You should not sit, stand in, or move anything on a hot set.

Jenny - short for diesel electric generator, which powers the entire set

Key light - The main light source which could be one light, multiple lights, the sun or a combination of these. Whenever on set always mindful of the lights being used to light the set and never walk between a light and set (especially the key) during a take.

Key PA - the most experienced PA or been around the longest.

Lavaliers - Small microphones that are worn by the actors. These are usually hidden under the actors clothing. These are the mic’s used when an actor is “getting mic’d”. It may also be called a radio mic because the sound is transmitted to the mixer.

Lighting terms - “Kill the light.” “Save the light.” - turn off the light.

Lock-up - Order given by 1st AD to have all movement on set stopped while the shot is happening. All movement within the frame line or near the set is stopped, all talking or work that can be heard on set is stopped.

Lunch - Meal break 6 hours after Crew Call time.

Magic/Golden hour - A 15 to 30 minute time at sunset or sunrise which creates a warm glow.

Martini - last shot of the day

Master shot - wide shot of the entire area

Meal penalty - on union shoots, there is a meal penalty if the crew doesn’t break for lunch or 2nd meal every 6 hours. Non-union shoots are supposed to work according to state labor laws.

MOS - no sound is being recorded for this shot.

New Deal - When the current scene has been shot and we’re moving on to the next scene.

Overlapping - This when the actors speak at the same time and overlap their voice, or someone speaks and a door closes. This causes a problem when the editor needs to cut together takes from different camera angles each with their own sound track. It is important that you learn to take a beat between your dialogue and another actors dialogue, or any action which causes noise such as putting down a cup or picking up keys.

Paper tape - paper-like tape widely used where gaffers tape is too strong (like on an exterior of a car or other sensitive surfaces)

Pay off - When someone such as lawn care services need to be paid to stop work or move on while the crew is recording dialogue. It can range from free lunch to a few thousand dollars in extreme cases.

Plate Shot - Wide shot of scene without actors used for editing.

POV - point of view. The camera shoots the scene as it would look through the character's eyes.

Pre-pro - short for pre-production, this is the time needed to set up the shoot such as getting actors, permits, crew, locations ...etc

Production - This is the time need to actually shoot the scenes.

Post production - This is where the completed footage is processed, edited, and effects added to produce the final product.

Producer - oversees the money side of shooting. May have optioned the idea & created the entire shoot.

Production Designer - head of the Art department, all the props, the scenery, everything that makes up the environment of the set we're shooting

Production Value - the quality of the film, not the acting or directing, but the sets, costumes, design.

Promo - A shoot designed to promote another project, usually for TV shows or events.

Props - short for 'properties'. Objects used by the talent. (Glasses, briefcase, cell phone) Not a structural part of the set.

Pushed call - When the call time has been pushed to a later time. Example: Instead of 7 am, they say the call times have been pushed 1/2 hour. So you'd come in at 7:30 am.

Residuals - payments made to talent every time the spot or show runs.

Reaction Shot - This is a close shot of an actors face while they are pretending to respond to the other actors dialogue or some event that would be happening in the scene.

Reverse Shot - This is where the camera is now shooting in the opposite direction. This is a major move as everything has to be moved. Anything that was behind the camera will now be in the shot. All of the lights and set dressing will need to be reset.

Rolling - camera is rolling!)also known as Speed, or Speeding)

Room Tone - Sound that is recorded at the end of a take with no one moving or talking. Usually lasts about 30 seconds and is used for the sound editor to match background noises.

Safety Meeting - meeting held by 1st AD at beginning of shoot to notify everyone of or to highlight any safety concerns peculiar to the shot or locations.

Scrim - a wire filter placed in front of lights to reduce the intensity of the light.

Second Unit - a separate small crew for crowd shots, stunts, insert shots that do not require the main actors.

Shot list - list of shots planned for the day

Sides - scripts of what will be shot that day

Slate - also known as the Marker, Sticks, or the Clapper. Has the scene and take numbers written on it and shows the time code, so the film can be synched with the sound. Sound equipment

Stage - the huge stage where entire sets are built. CBS, Universal, Paramount, Sony have like 35 stages where many TV shows, commercials, and movies are constantly being done.

Steadycam - A camera mounting rig that is attached to the camera operator.

Sticks - Two meanings: A tripod used to support the camera, or the Slate which is used to sync sound

Striking - You say "Striking" before you turn on a set light to prepare people for the light. It also means to break down and take away from the set. (Strike that light.)

Sync sound - When audio is being recorded in sync with the camera. Usually done using a slate.

Take - Scene 101, take 1. If the director wants another take, it will be Scene 101, take 2. and so forth.

Trades - Hollywood Reporter, Variety, respected and widely read by the industry

Teamster - A person that belongs to the Teamsters Union as is a member of the transportation dept (transpo).

Turnaround - 2 meanings - 1. we've shot the scene from one side, now we'll turn around and shoot it from the other side. 2. The amount of hours that's required to rest before you can come back and work another day (typically it's 10 hours)

Two shot - a shot where 2 people are in the shot, versus a Single where it's just 1 person.

Video village - A place with chairs and monitors for viewing the takes. This is set up for Executive Producers and Agency representatives.

VTR - Video recording of the scene. Used to provide playback of takes.

UPM (Unit production manager, also known as Production manager, also known as Production Supervisor or sometimes Line Producer.

Walking meal - if a meal is eaten without a sit down break then it's referred to as a 'walking meal'.

Wild Sound / Wild Lines - Sound which is recorded without camera or without sync to camera. Wild lines are where an actor will repeat their dialogue to give the sound editor extra material to edit with in case there was a problem with the sync dialogue.

Wrangler - there are extras wranglers who work with background extras, and animal wranglers who work with animals.

Wrap - that's a wrap! We're done, go home! Also used for equipment "Wrap that light."